

REMARKS

The present Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed April 6, 2007. Claims 7 and 11 are amended, and new claims 16-18 are added. Claims 1-18 are now pending in view of the above amendments.

Please note that the following remarks are not intended to be an exhaustive enumeration of the distinctions between any cited references and the claimed invention. The remarks or lack of remarks herein are not an admission concerning the Examiner's comments or construction of the cited art. Rather, the distinctions identified and discussed below are presented solely by way of example to illustrate some of the differences between the claimed invention and the cited references. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments to the claims and the following remarks. For the Examiner's convenience and reference, Applicant's remarks are presented in the order in which the corresponding issues were raised in the Office Action.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejected claims 7-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph for indefiniteness. In particular, the Office Action suggested that the phrase "the thickness of the with a neutral" on lines 15-16 of claim 1 and lines 15-16 of claim 11 is confusingly worded because it is not clear as to exactly what is being removed.

Applicant notes that claims 1 and 11 do not include the phrase "the thickness of the with a neutral" and it is unclear as to what the Examiner is rejecting. If the Examiner meant to reject claim 7 (since claim 1 has been withdrawn), claim 7 also does not include the phrase "the thickness of the with a neutral." For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Nonetheless, claims 7 and 11 have been amended to clarify the subject matter being claimed.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejected claims 7, 9, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,430,965 (*Eda*). Because *Eda* does not teach or suggest each and every element of the rejected claims, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Claim 7 is directed to a method for manufacturing a glass substrate for an information recording medium. By this paper, claim 7 has been amended to clarify that the grinding step and the second washing (an alkaline washing) step are performed after the first washing (an acidic washing) step.

Eda fails to teach or suggests these elements of claim 7, among others. For example, *Eda* teaches a washing method that includes "dipping of a glass substrate in hydrochloric acid and spraying acid onto a glass substrate." See col. 6, lls. 25-27. *Eda* further states that it is preferred "to wash the whole portion of the glass substrate with hydrochloric acid". See col. 6, lls. 19-20; lls. 26-45.

While *Eva* discloses washing with hydrochloric acid, claim 7 requires a subsequent grinding step and second (alkaline) washing. However, examples 1-4 of *Eda* only describe the use of a neutral washing agent for washing a glass substrate after grinding. *Eda* teaches, for example, that the "glass substrate was immersed and watched successively in the watching tanks of a neutral detergent and water." See col. 10, lls. 1-3. There is no suggestion that the neutral washing agent of *Eda* is configured to remove some of the surface layer of the glass substrate as required by claim 7.

Thus, immersing the glass substrate in neutral detergent and water fails to teach or suggest that the altered surface layer formed by the first washing step is removed by the grinding step and by the second alkaline washing step. In other words, *Eda* fails to teach or suggest that the grinding step and the second washing step (an alkaline washing) are performed after the first washing step. *Eda* also fails to teach or suggest that the altered surface layer formed by the acidic washing is removed by the grinding step and the second washing step.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 7 is not anticipated by the cited art. Claims 9 and 10 are not anticipated for at least the same reasons.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 8 and 11-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Eda*. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection at least on the grounds that the references – either individually or in combination – fail to teach or suggest each and every element of the rejected claims.

Because claim 7 is in condition for allowance as discussed above, claim 8 is in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons.

Claim 11 has been amended to clarify that the removing step and the uniformly etching step using an alkali washing liquid are performed after the immersing step using an acid solution. Claim 11 also requires that the altered surface layer is removed not only by the removing step but also by the uniformly etching step. In claim 11, the removing step is performed in consideration of a later removing step or a later etching step, i.e., the uniformly etching step.

In contrast, *Eda* describes a neutral washing agent that is used in a washing step after grinding. See e.g., col. 10, lls. 1-3 (glass substrate was immersed and washed successively in the washing tanks of a neutral detergent and water). The neutral washing agent of *Eda* is not configured to remove some of the surface of the glass substrate. Therefore, *Eda* does not suggest a removing step to be performed in consideration of the uniformly etching step. *Eda* fails to suggest the combination of the removing step using an abrasive and the uniformly etching step using an alkali washing liquid, which steps are performed after the immersing step using an acid solution. *Eda* further fails to teach or suggest that the removing step is performed in consideration of the uniformly etching step.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is patentable over the cited art. For at least the same reasons, claims 12-15 are also patentable over the cited art.

New Claims

Because claims 7-11 are patentable at least for the reasons enumerated herein, new claims 16-18 are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe the claims as amended are in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, or which may be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 6th day of August, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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